

Written Testimony of Richard Holmes
Connecticut Funeral Directors Association
Public Health Committee
Friday, March 14, 2014

Senate Bill 434, An Act Concerning Food and Beverage Service in Funeral Homes

Good morning Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, Senator Welch, Representative Srinivasan, and the distinguished members of the Public Health Committee.

My name is Richard Holmes and I am a member, past president, and legislative committee member of the Connecticut Funeral Directors Association. I am a part owner and funeral director for a funeral home in Manchester. In addition, I was also co-chairman of the Task Force on the Service of Beverages and Food in Funeral Homes (established in Public Act 13-305), which convened this past fall to study a provision to allow the serving of food and beverages in funeral homes which is currently prohibited under the state's Public Health Regulation 20-211-28.

I am here to ask for your support in approving Senate Bill 434, "An Act Concerning Food and Beverage Service In Funeral Homes." This legislation will amend the regulation to allow funeral homes to serve non-alcoholic beverages and packaged food to a person or persons who are making arrangements or pre-arrangements. It will allow a funeral establishment to have available and offer to those persons coffee, soda, tea, etc. and a bit of food to hopefully make a stressful time a little less stressful.

To clarify, this bill will only allow non-alcoholic beverages and packaged food in the funeral home during a small meeting situation, not before, during, or after a wake, a funeral service, or a gathering of people in the funeral home.

Thank you for allowing me to speak before you, I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.